

REMARKS

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121, the marked-up version of this preliminary amendment, indicating the changes made to claim 1, is appended hereto as Appendix A.

In response to the written restriction requirement, applicant hereby elects the invention of Group I (claims 1-9), with traverse.

However, applicant submits that the four groups of invention identified in the outstanding office action are closely related and, therefore, would require common areas of search and consideration. Thus, there is no benefit in having these groups of claims examined and prosecuted in separate applications.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing, applicant submits that the restriction requirement should be withdrawn, and that all of the claims should be examined on the merits at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

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12/20/00

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Jo Ann Whalen

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APPENDIX A

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In reference to the changes made herein, additions appear as bolded and double-underlined text, while deletions appear as strikethrough text, as indicated below.

In the Claims:

The following is the marked-up version of claim 1, as amended

1. (Amended) A method of ~~designing~~ identifying an ion channel blocker for an ion channel comprising:
providing an ion channel having an external vestibule portion and
~~providing~~ identifying an antibody, binding portion, probe, or ligand specific to the external vestibule portion of the ion channel, wherein the antibody, binding portion, probe, or ligand is effective to inhibit ion transport through the ion channel.